

# A COMPARISON ON INDONESIAN AND SOUTH KOREAN NATIONALISM: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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## ABSTRAK

Nasionalisme memainkan peranan penting dalam segala aspek dinamika masyarakat, baik di Indonesia maupun di Korea Selatan. Nasionalisme di dua negara itu dipertajam oleh perjuangan menentang pemerintah kolonial. Indonesia menghadapi kolonial Belanda dan Jepang, sedangkan Korea Selatan menghadapi kolonial Jepang. Di samping itu, kedua negara itu didominasi oleh konflik dengan berbagai macam kekuatan asing serta konflik dengan partai komunis di negaranya masing-masing. Untuk mencapai kemerdekaan negara dan identitas nasionalnya masing-masing Indonesia dan Korea Selatan berjuang menentang kekuatan asing dan berusaha mengatasi konflik di dalam negaranya. Oleh karena itu, ada persamaan dan perbedaan antara kedua negara itu. Persamaannya adalah kedua negara itu sama-sama berhasil dalam menciptakan nasionalisme. Perbedaannya, nasionalisme di Indonesia ada dalam pengaruh dua dunia, yaitu blok barat dan blok timur, sedangkan nasionalisme di Korea Selatan ada dalam pengaruh blok barat.

Kata Kunci: nasionalisme, pemerintah kolonial, kolonialisme, komunisme

## INTRODUCTION

**H**istorically, the evolution of Indonesian and South Korean nationalism can be divided into three phases: origin, growth, and development. In these phases both Indonesia and Korea were attacked by foreign powers. Indonesia faced the most serious threats to her independence in the form of Dutch and Japanese occupation and

and movements of Indonesian and South Korean nationalism, such as colonialism and the origins of nationalism, independence struggles, post-independence government, civil war as well as the problems of communism, military dictatorship, democratization, and globalization.

## THE MEANING OF NATIONALISM

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China. In order to achieve freedom and national identity, both Indonesians and Koreans had to struggle for national independence and identity. In this paper, I explain the major events

historical movement, or a combination of these. On an emotional dimension, it is defined as a psychological state of people in a nation, as "anti-feeling" (Nehru), national

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consciousness (Lasswell-Kaplan), or sentiment unifying a group of people (B. C. Shafer). On a cognitive dimension, nationalism is defined as a political doctrine. According E. Kedourie, nationalism is "the doctrine that [claims that] the only legitimate type of government is national self-government". Nationalism as a historical movement is difficult to define, because, as Louis Snyder points out, nationalism may mean "whatever a given people, on the basis of their own historical experience, decide it to mean".

In my paper, I will emphasize the political and historical, rather than psychological, aspects of Indonesian and Korean nationalism. Thus it is necessary to start my work with the analysis of political activism in Indonesia and South Korea between 1905 and 1945. In this period, Indonesian nationalism was a movement of resistance against a foreign ruler, led by a small elite and supported by the majority of the population. Likewise, Korean nationalism is an expression of the collective consciousness of the Korean people, aimed at facing the challenges coming from various foreign powers.

The concept of nationalism was never formulated clearly by the nationalist movements, and the principal differences between the various movements were related to the tactics they used. Both in Indonesia and Korea there were two main tactics, namely, a partial cooperation with the colonial government and non-cooperation. However, in Japanese-ruled Korea these two alternatives ceased to exist in the late 1930s as resistance became impossible and the Japanese military authorities demanded total and active collaboration, instead of partial or passive cooperation, from Koreans.

## COLONIALISM AND THE ORIGINS NATIONALISM

Indonesian nationalism developed in response to Dutch and Japanese colonialism and exploitation. That is, early Indonesian nationalism was a reaction to colonial rule between 1602-1910. By contrast, Korean

nationalism, though its growth was greatly stimulated by Japanese rule, had emerged before the Japanese occupation, and thus it was not created by colonial domination. Since Korea, unlike Indonesia, had been a unified, centralized and ethnically homogeneous state centuries before Japanese occupation, Korean national identity had not to be artificially constructed. Of course, this is not to deny that the ideas of European nationalism did stimulate the growth of modern Korean nationalism. There was not always a direct continuity between pre-modern and post-1880 Korean national identity. For instance, in the pre-modern era the use of *hangul* (the Korean national alphabet) was by no means cultivated and encouraged by the Chinese-educated traditional *yangban* elite, and its renaissance started only with the emergence of modern nationalism.

An important differences between Indonesian and Korean nationalism was that in both countries religion played an important, though not absolute, role in developing national identity. In Indonesia it was Islam that constituted a key element of nationalistic consciousness. From a Muslim perspective, Dutch colonialism represented Christian rule over Muslim believers, even though the Dutch did not prove particularly successful in spreading Christianity among the various peoples of the Indonesian archipelago. In the 19th and early 20th century, the ideology of local rural protests against colonial economic exploitation was usually of a religious character, and the first successful nationalist mass movement, the Sarekat Islam, was also rooted in Islamic ideas. At that time, the Sarekat Islam was more concerned with the economic dominance of the Chinese minority than with Dutch rule, but since Chinese were also non-Muslims, a nationalist approach based on Islam was applicable to this situation as well.

In Korea, Confucian thinkers and *yangbans* played an important role in the conservative opposition to Western pressure and increasing Japanese domination. From the Confucian perspective, both Europeans

and Japanese were barbarians with whom contacts were to be avoided or kept at the minimum level. Even though Confucianism was subjected to severe criticism by 20th-century Korean nationalists who blamed it for the country's pre-colonial backwardness, Korean antipathy toward the Japanese seems to have been partly rooted in these centuries-old Confucian prejudices (reinforced by the bitter experiences of Hideyoshi's invasions and colonial rule). While Confucianism is more a philosophy than a religion, "real" religions also helped to shape Korean nationalism. One of these was an uniquely Korean religious movement called Tonghak. The peasant-based Tonghak movement, and its successor, the Chondogyo church, played a considerable role in nationalist activity. The contribution of Christian-educated Korean intellectuals was probably even more important, since these persons were familiar with Western nationalist conceptions and Western organizational methods. Unlike European colonial rulers, the Japanese were not Christians, and therefore in Korea the ideas of Christian and national solidarity did not come into conflict with each other. Actually, in the last stage of colonial domination the Japanese authorities attempted to force Korean Christians to practise Japanese Shinto rituals, which further reinforced the link between Christianity and nationalism.

A major difference between Indonesian and Korean nationalism was that in the colonial period there were only local identities in Indonesia, rather than an all-encompassing Indonesian identity, whereas in Korea there was a national identity covering the whole territory of the country. National identity in Korea was based on one state, one ethnic group, and one language. This stood in sharp contrast with the heterogeneity characteristic of Indonesia. Indonesia had five major religions (Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, and Buddhism) as well as many local religions. Indonesia has more than 300 ethnic groups who speak over 250 languages. Since about 60% of the population live on the island of Java, Java inevitably has played a dominant role in the affairs of the whole of Indonesia.

## INDEPENDENCE STRUGGLES

The awakening of the Indonesian nationalism and the formation of the nation-state of Indonesia is usually seen as the process of struggle against Dutch and Japanese colonialism for the achievement of freedom and independence. From a comparative perspective, this period is similar to the process of the awakening of Korean nationalism and the struggle against Japanese colonialism. Coincidentally, Indonesian and Korean national independence was achieved almost at the same time (August 17, 1945 and August 15, 1945 respectively).

Indonesian nationalism in 1900-1945 was characterized by the growth of the nationalist movement, the *Indonesian Manifesto* (1924), the creation of the concept of "Indonesia", and the declaration of the principle of one nation, one motherland, and one national language of Indonesia (the Youth Oath of October 28, 1928). From the Indonesian national historical perspective, this period is seen as the culmination of the process of the integration of the people of Indonesia from diversity to unity. This process had started in the Srivijaya Era (the 7th-11th centuries) and the Majapahit Era (the 14th-15th centuries). It was also often called the awakening of the modern struggle for independence.

The first important vehicle of the anti-Dutch nationalist movement was the Sarekat Islam (Islamic Union), created in 1912. In 1916 the Indonesian nationalists established the Volksraad (People's Council). In the Volksraad, the selected representatives of major population groups could deliberate and offer advice to the government.

In Korea, the first modern nationalist mass movement against Japanese rule took place in March 1919. It started with a nationalist manifesto based on the idea of the right for self-determination, a conception recently proposed by American President Woodrow Wilson. In these protests, which were initiated by Christian and Chondogyo leaders, all strata of Korean society participated. The colonial authorities brutally suppressed the protests, but they felt it necessary to liberalize their rule a bit. In the 1920s, Korean nationalists

still found it difficult to organize political associations, and therefore they concentrated on cultural and economic nationalism. One manifestation of this economic nationalism was an attempt to persuade Koreans to buy Korean made industrial products, rather than Japanese made ones, in order to facilitate the development of a national industry.

In this period, both Indonesian and Korean Communists fought against colonial rule, but they rarely cooperated with non-Communist nationalists. Thus the roots of post-independence conflicts between Communists and anti-Communist forces in Indonesia and Korea can be traced back to the 1920s and 1930s.

However, there was a major difference between post-1945 Indonesia and South Korea. While Indonesia could achieve complete independence, South Korea is still substantially dependent on American military support. Historically, in Indonesia the birth of the nation and national integration was the formation of the nation-state as manifested by the proclamation of national independence on August 17, 1945 by Soekarno and Hatta, the two most prominent Indonesian "Founding Fathers" who became the first President and Vice President of the Republic of Indonesia. By contrast, on August 15, 1945 Korea's independence was restored, but immediately after liberation from colonial rule, Koreans were confronted with the tragedy of territorial division. The United States and the Soviet Union, whose roles were decisive in defeating the Japanese forces, occupied the territories of southern and northern Korea respectively. That is, South Korea was occupied by the United States, while North Korea was administered by the Soviet Union. This resulted in the emergence of two Korean governments, a right-wing dictatorship in the South and a Communist dictatorship in the North.

## POST-INDEPENDENCE GOVERNMENT

The first generation of post-independence Indonesian and South Korean leaders were quite similar to each other in that the political leaders of both countries pursued confron-

tationist nationalist policies. In Indonesia this period was the period of confrontation (*konfrontasi*) with the Netherlands, and later also with the United States, Malaysia, and Britain. The first years of this period can be called as the formation period of the very deepest and actual solidarity of Indonesian nationhood. By the time the British, American, Australian, and Dutch troops landed on the Indonesian islands in late September 1945, a functioning republican administration had already been established in Indonesia. The subsequent Dutch attempts to reimpose colonial rule only reinforced Indonesian nationalist resistance, and eventually ended in failure. Later Sukarno tried to prevent the creation of Malaysia, proposing an Indonesian-dominated Indonesian-Malaysian-Filipino confederation (*Maphilindo*) instead. This led to a confrontation (*konfrontasi*) with Malaysia and Britain. He also clashed with the Dutch over Irian Jaya. Some peculiar manifestations of Sukarno's nationalism were the renaming of the Indian Ocean as Indonesian Ocean and his declaration to suspend Indonesia's UN membership.

In South Korea Syngman Rhee, the first president of the country, strongly insisted on unifying the two parts of Korea by force, and so did the similarly nationalist North Korean dictator, Kim Il Sung. The Rhee regime enjoyed the military, political and economic support of the USA, whereas North Korea was assisted by China and Soviet Union. Thus the confrontation of rightist and Communist Korean nationalists inevitably generated an international conflict when in 1950 North Korea launched a military attack on the South and Washington decided to send US combat troops to confront the northern invasion. Now, more than five decades later, the legacy of the Korean War is still to be felt in the arena of international diplomacy. Another manifestation of Rhee's nationalism was his extremely hostile attitude to Japan in the 1953-1960 period. No matter how interested the United States was in persuading her South Korean and Japanese allies to cooperate with each other, she could not talk Rhee into adopting a more constructive attitude toward Tokyo. Ironically, in the mid-1950s South

Korea was often more hostile to Japan than Communist North Korea.

## **CIVIL WAR AND THE PROBLEM OF COMMUNISM**

The 1945-1965 era was the period of post-independence nation-building in Indonesia, which started with the establishment of the national government and a parliamentary democratic system. The proclamation of the Republic of Korea was also accompanied by the creation of a democratic constitution, but in South Korea there was no serious experimentation with democracy in the 1948-1960 period. While in Indonesia the introduction of Guided Democracy took place in 1958, that is, nine years after the final departure of the Dutch, the Rhee regime was from the beginning repressive and anti-democratic. This difference was caused, at least partly, by the following two factors: First, the Rhee regime continued to employ many pro-Japanese officials and policemen, which made it unpopular in the eyes of many Korean nationalists. Second, the conflict between Communists and non-Communist forces was more antagonistic in Korea (where the country was divided between a rightist and a Communist regime) than in Indonesia.

The conflicts that took place between Indonesian Communists and non-Communist nationalists in Madiun in 1948 were certainly similar to the Korean political and military conflicts of the 1946-1953 period, but there were important differences between Indonesia and South Korea. Namely, in Indonesia Sukarno, though he himself was not a Communist, considered the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) a member of the anti-imperialist front. This was the so-called *Nasakom* policy, i.e., an attempt to combine the values of nationalism, religion, and Communism. Sukarno's tolerant attitude to the PKI was closely connected with his strong nationalism, since in his conflicts with Sumatran separatist groups and with Malaysia he badly needed the Communists and their Soviet and Chinese supporters as internal and external allies.

By contrast, in Korea the problem of national division resulted in that Communists and non-Communists were not merely political rivals but also the representatives of two competing states, each of which was supported by a superpower. Since both the ROK and the DPRK regarded itself as the sole legitimate representative of the nation, there was little or no prospect of cooperation between them. In addition, the two Koreas, unlike the various Indonesian nationalist groups, had no common enemy against which they could have fought together. After all, the Japanese left in 1945, and while Communists considered the United States their main external opponent, rightist nationalists regarded the Soviet Union as their principal enemy.

However, Indonesian parliamentary democracy was also soon replaced by Sukarno's Guided Democracy. Worse still, this second period of Indonesian nation-building ended with a national tragedy, the so-called Indonesia Communist Party Movement Affair (G-30S-PKI), which occurred on 30th September 1965. The growing tension between the PKI and rightist military generals culminated in a coup attempt led by Lieutenant Colonel Untung. Untung's group brutally murdered six top generals before being suppressed by General Suharto, the head of the army's strategic command. Following this event, Suharto took control of the army, and soon of the state as well. By March 1966, he had eased Sukarno out of effective power. Although the identity and motives of the coup's instigators are still controversial, the army alleged that the PKI had been responsible for it. In response, army units and many Muslim groups, particularly in the countryside, began massacring Communists and their supporters late in 1965. Between 300,000 to 1 million people were killed in the anti-Communist crackdown. Essentially liquidated by the executions, the PKI was formally banned on March 13, 1966. Thus Indonesia eventually also reached the point of the establishment of a violently anti-Communist dictatorship, though the character of the Suharto regime, as we will see, had more in common with the Park

Chung Hee regime than with the rule of Syngman Rhee.

## NATIONALISM UNDER MILITARY DICTATORSHIPS

In the 1965-1998 period (particularly in 1965-1988) there were considerable similarities between Indonesian and South Korean political and economic development, for both countries were ruled by modernization-oriented military dictatorships that pursued relatively pragmatic and moderate, rather than aggressive, foreign policies. Moreover, political and economic cooperation between Jakarta and Seoul underwent a substantial improvement in these decades.

In Indonesia this was the era of Suharto's so-called New Order (1965-1998), during which nation-building was focused on political stability and economic development under the military dictatorship (authoritarian) system. Suharto's concentration on economic development implied a break with Sukarno's confrontationist diplomacy and a shift toward a more pragmatic and less nationalistic foreign policy. Not long after 1965, he put an end to the *konfrontasi* with Malaysia, and in general favored economic and political cooperation with Indonesia's neighbors. Relations with Western powers, which had been denounced by Sukarno as neo-colonialists, also improved under Suharto, who did his best to attract foreign investment into Indonesia. His pragmatism manifested itself in the fact that despite the bloody elimination of the PKI, Jakarta continued to maintain relatively cordial relations with the Soviet Union after 1965, and the Indonesian government did not support Washington's military involvement in the Vietnam War.

There were two exceptions, however. During China's Cultural Revolution, relations between Indonesia and the PRC became so hostile that the Indonesian and Chinese embassies in Beijing and Jakarta respectively were attacked and occupied by violent mobs, and there was no substantial rapprochement between the two countries until the 1980s. In addition, in the mid-1970s Indonesia invaded and occupied East Timor, which had recently

gained her independence from Portugal. This action sowed the seeds of a long and bitter conflict, since the majority of the population in East Timor preferred independence to Indonesian rule, and vehemently opposed the island's annexation.

During the three decades of the New Order the process of industrialization and rural development proved relatively successful. On the other hand, however, political, social, and cultural conflicts arose between certain groups and areas, particularly in East Timor and Irian Jaya. In any case, Indonesian modernization did not prove as successful as South Korea's economic development. Indonesia failed to achieve an industrial and export potential comparable to that of the ROK. Social and cultural dissatisfaction and protest kept increasing, and it finally culminated in the Reformation Movement that put an end to the New Order in 1998. President Suharto had to resign from his position and was succeeded by Habibie.

Despite the recurring political conflicts between South Korean military dictator Park Chung Hee and his opposition, the South Korean economy boomed in the Park era (1961-1979), and this development continued under the military regime of Chun Doo Hwan (1980-1988) as well. The key to South Korea's growing prosperity was foreign trade. In a sharp contrast with Rhee's import-substitution policies, exports increased dramatically since the early 1960s. Park, unlike Rhee, adopted a pragmatic attitude toward Japan, and in the mid-1960s he managed to normalize relations between the two countries. This move was strongly resented by South Korean nationalist politicians and students but it greatly facilitated South Korean industrialization. In fact, Park, a former officer of the Japanese army and an admirer of the Meiji Revolution, considered Japan a model for South Korea's industrialization drive. For instance, South Korea's giant conglomerates, the so-called *chaebol*, were largely patterned upon the big Japanese corporations. Park also did his best to secure American military and economic assistance, and this is why he decided to send South Korean combat troops to South Vietnam in



order to support US military operations there. Moreover, he realized that there was little or no hope of unifying Korea in the near future, and therefore he preferred economic competition with North Korea to the kind of empty slogans about a "March to the North" that were so characteristic of the Rhee regime.

This does not mean, however, that Park's policies entirely lacked a nationalist aspect. He laid a strong emphasis on the development of heavy and chemical industries, which he considered a symbol of economic independence. Unlike Chun Doo Hwan and Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew, he preferred borrowing from abroad (and providing domestic *chaebol* with cheap loans) to attracting foreign multinationals into the country, even though this strategy led to the accumulation of a substantial foreign debt. Anxious to achieve self-sufficiency in defense, he also tried to develop nuclear weapons, but Washington forced him to abandon this goal.

Despite the dramatic successes of his modernization drive, the South Korean population became increasingly dissatisfied with Park's repressive policies. In fact, the "economic miracle" was achieved at a high cost in terms of human and labor rights, and the privileged treatment of the *chaebol* created resentment even among small and middle entrepreneurs. Growing political opposition probably played an important role in Park's assassination by his own security chief, and it eventually compelled Park's successor, military dictator Chun Doo Hwan, to give his consent to the re-establishment of parliamentary democracy.

## DEMOCRATIZATION, GLOBALIZATION AND NATIONALISM

### History Setting

The process of globalization in Indonesia and South Korea became more intensive in 1997. Both the Indonesian and South Korean governments have plans for a diversified international network and have accepted values such as democracy, human rights, social welfare, and environmental protection.

Both Indonesia and South Korea reacted to globalization by trying to restructure their economic, social, cultural and political systems in order to meet the requirements of global standards. The two countries opened to globalization's conceptions about free markets, individualism, and civil society. They are moving to the direction of democratic development. At the same time, however, there were also efforts aimed at preserving national cultural traditions that are increasingly threatened by another aspect of globalization, namely, by the uniformization (or, from an Asian perspective, Westernization) of culture and lifestyles.

That democracy has survived the 1997 financial crisis in both Indonesia and South Korea is highly important for economic development. On the other hand, Indonesia and South Korea reacted quite differently to these economic problems. In Indonesia the election of President Abdurrahman Wahid in October 1999 was crucial in restoring some degree of political stability that is essential for overcoming the economic crisis. He implemented some economic reforms, but somewhat slowly. By contrast, South Korean economic recovery was more successful. In fact, the financial crisis convinced the Kim Dae Jung administration of the necessity of attracting more foreign direct investment, even at the cost of growing foreign control over the national economy. The success of this policy played an important role in South Korean economic recovery.

Sung Chul Yang notes that there are two dominant theories about the current prospects of nationalism. The first, which he calls "Theory A," claims that nowadays nationalism is undergoing a decline, thanks to the decrease of conflicts between nations, the increasing emphasis on international integration, and the decreasing stress or nationalist isolationism. By contrast, "Theory B" highlights the current growth of "nationalist conflict, hostility between nations, even armed conflict".

In post 1998 South Korea, the situation cannot be described either solely by "Theory A or only by "Theory B". On the one hand, under President Kim Dae-Jung, relations with

Japan improved. For instance, South Korea consented to cultural cooperation with Japan. Following the economic crisis of 1997, the ROK also tried her best to attract more foreign investment. Furthermore, under Kim Dae-Jung and then Roh Moo-Hyun, relations with North Korea kept improving, and the Sino-South Korean and the South Korean-Russian relationship also has improved dramatically since the end of the Cold War.

Under the administration of US President George W. Bush, however, a substantial part of the South Korean population became much more anti-American than ever before. Some South Koreans view the United States as an obstacle to reunification after the end of Cold War. They blame George W. Bush for the new tension between North and South Korea, and strive to achieve an inter-Korean rapprochement through a dialogue with Pyongyang. Actually, the improvement of North Korean-South Korean relations plays an important role in the growth of anti-Americanism in the ROK, because South Koreans no longer feel so strongly that they need American protection against North Korea.

In this period, the Koguryo issue also created a new cultural conflict between South Korea and China. The Chinese government claims Koguryo as part of its own history, whereas most Koreans believe that Koguryo belonged to Korea in the past. Beijing's attempt to "snatch" a component of Korea's history and claim that Koguryo was a "sub-ordinate state that fell under the jurisdiction of the Chinese dynasties" generated strong hostile emotions in both Koreas. This situation induces South Korea to reevaluate her strategic relationship with China, even though Chinese-South Korean relations have expanded dramatically since diplomatic relations were formalized in 1992. In the last decade Beijing has tended to prefer economic cooperation with Seoul to its traditional political and military alliance with Pyongyang.

Nor were Japanese-South Korean relations completely free of tension. For issue, the issue of Japanese middle school history textbooks (which down played the crimes of Japanese colonialism) evoked strong negative

reactions in the ROK, and Seoul did its best to take advantage of this situation in its trade negotiations with Tokyo. Another constant bone of contention is the status of Dok-do, an island which is claimed by both countries.

In sum, "old-fashioned", 19th-century-type nationalism is still strong in East Asia in general and South Korea in particular (see the cultural and historical debates between China and Korea and the historical and territorial debates between Japan and Korea), even though the situation has improved a lot since 1990. South Korea's successful post-1961 economic development as well as the country's recent achievements in the field of sports has greatly strengthened South Korean national consciousness and pride, which may result in new conflicts with the United States and other countries. Generational differences in attitudes make the situation even more complex. Older generations tend to remain hostile to both North Korea and Japan but they usually have a favorable opinion about the United States and the American-South Korean alliance. By contrast, the worldview and lifestyle of younger generations is more cosmopolitan and Westernized than that of older ones, which partly reduces the potential of nationalist isolationism. Young people are also relatively favorably disposed toward a dialogue with North Korea and Japan. At the same time, however, anti-Americanism is much stronger among those generations that were born after the Korean War than among older ones.

In Indonesia Sukarno and Suharto attempted to create an Indonesian nation out of the various ethnic groups. The language of the Indonesian nation was to be *bahasa indonesia*, which was not the language of any ethnic group and thus every group could accept it. Still, both Sukarno and Suharto represented Java against Sumatra and some other islands, which weakened the cohesion of the Indonesian nation.

By the 1990s, it seemed that their attempt to create an Indonesian nation has been partly successful. For instance, *bahasa indonesia* is widely spoken and used both in the media and in education. Ethnic languages do not play a similarly important role. Thus



Indonesia, like South Korea, does not belong solely to "Theory A," not does she belong only to "Theory B."

Most islands and ethnic groups do not want to be independent from Indonesia. Even if there are ethnic debates, they are, in most cases, not as serious as the Sumatran-Javan civil war was in 1958-1960.

Moreover, Indonesia has basically good relations with all of her neighbors, including Malaysia and Singapore with which she had serious conflicts under Sukarno. As opposed to the Sukarno era, Indonesian-American relations are relatively good, and after a long hostility under Suharto, relations with China have also been normalized.

Nevertheless, in certain regions, particularly in East Timor, Aceh (Northern Sumatra), and Irian Jaya, separatist feelings remained strong throughout the Suharto era, and East Timor did become independent after a long armed conflict. Unfortunately, there are now armed conflicts in Aceh too, which seem to be partly rooted in the local tradition of Islamic resistance to Dutch colonial occupation and to the post-independence rule of secular Javanese elites.

Since 1998, such conflicts have intensified. This period is often called the "Reformation Era," during which the new governments, from the Habibie presidency to Abdurrahman Wahid and Megawati Sukarnoputri, have attempted to reform the political and government system in order to transform it from an authoritarian regime to a more democratic one and build a broad-based civil society. Under the new policy, political movements for independence reached their height, with a Papuan congress held in May 2000 drawing as many as 25,000 participants. If the Habibie government's response to the growing independence movement in Irian Jaya was to split it by dividing the province into several parts, Gus Dur's was to offer special autonomy in the hope that this would gain support for the Indonesian state.

It is a general phenomenon in Indonesia that among family members and relatives, people usually still speak Javanese or other local languages, which shows that the use

of Indonesia language did not eliminate local identities.

Islamic fundamentalism found some followers in Indonesia too, though Indonesian Islam is generally more tolerant than Middle Eastern Islam. In the recent years there were several terrorist bomb attacks in Indonesia, including the ones in Bali and Jakarta. Since these acts were committed by Islamist activists, the Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI) found it necessary to declare that "terrorism was unacceptable, terrorism is *haram* (forbidden), no matter whether terror is committed by individuals, groups, or states". Due to the foreign connections of these Islamist groups, these attacks had an international dimension as well, but their targets were Westerners, rather than Indonesians, and thus they did not threaten to drag the country into a military conflict with another state. In some cases (in Bali and Jakarta) Islamist terrorist attempted to provoke conflicts with the USA.

### **Similarities and Differences between Indonesia and South Korea**

Ethnic and cultural nationalism is still strong in both countries (see the debates over Koguryo, Dok-do and the American military presence in the ROK, or the issue of Aceh and Irian Jaya).

Indonesia's regional integration into ASEAN (with Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, Myanmar and other countries) seems to be more successful than South Korea's economic integration into Northeast Asia. Namely, South Korea is currently being pressured by Japan on the one side and by emerging China on the other, and she has no extensive contacts with countries of a comparable level of development (e.g., Taiwan). On the other hand, the South-east Asian economic region is less independent than the North-east Asian region, because in the case of foreign investments it is largely dominated by Asian countries outside ASEAN (Japan, China, South Korea, and Taiwan), rather than by any of the South-east Asian countries (with the possible exception of Singapore).

The zone to which Indonesia belongs is politically and militarily more stable than North-east Asia. By now the decades-long conflicts with China and Vietnam have been solved, and even Myanmar joined ASEAN, whereas South Korea is still threatened by the US-North Korean conflict. Thus South Korean nationalism (particularly anti-American feelings) can be occasionally more intense than Indonesian nationalism. In fact, in Indonesia most current national conflicts are internal ones: the recent secession of East Timor as well as the separatist movements in Irian Jaya and Aceh. Indonesia does not face a military challenge from any other country, nor does she need the protection, let alone military presence, of a Great Power. By contrast, the national conflicts with which South Korea has to cope are primarily international ones, and they induce Seoul to seek American military protection.

South Korea is an ethnically homogeneous country and thus she has not to be afraid of Indonesian-type ethnic separatism. However, this homogeneity also means that Korean cultural nationalism is stronger than Indonesian cultural nationalism, since it is more difficult to define what is Indonesian, rather than Javanese or Sumatran culture. We may also add that the advancement of globalization failed to eradicate a persistent element of post-1970 South Korean domestic politics, namely, the conflicts and rivalry between various provinces (particularly between the Cholla and Kyongsang provinces). During the last three decades, regionalist patterns have been reinforced, rather than weakened, in South Korean elections, no matter how much such sentiments contradict the principles of globalization.

## CONCLUSION

Nationalism in one way or another has played (and probably still plays) a crucial role in Indonesia and South Korea. Depending on economic, social, cultural, and political factors, nationalism often took different forms in the two countries, but similarities were also

considerable. Both Indonesian and (South) Korean nationalism was shaped by struggle against colonial (Dutch or Japanese) domination as well as conflicts with various foreign powers and the local Communist parties.

Both in Indonesia and South Korea economic and political progress is likely to be threatened by conflicts. One potential source of conflict is the tension between North and South Korea. It is high time for the Korean people to live in a reunified and fully independent state, free from outside interference and sovereign in their own territory. In Indonesia, the most serious conflicts arise inside the country, between the government and separatist forces.

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